

Message Text

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ORIGIN AID-20

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TO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

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GENEVA FOR PALMER

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ELAB, ILO

SUBJECT: INFORMAL AID OBSERVATIONS ON TECHNICAL COMMENTS
CONCERNING THE ILO PROGRAM AND BUDGET 1978-79

1. TEXT OF SUBJECT DOCUMENT FOLLOWS.
2. BEGIN TEXT: GENERAL - WE ARE DISTURBED BY THE UN-
NECESSARILY NEGATIVE TONE OF THE ANALYSIS. WE ARE
PARTICULARLY CONCERNED WITH THE CRITICAL COMMENTS CONCERN-
ING RESEARCH ACTIVITIES, THE EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAM AND THE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PROGRAM, WHICH IN OUR
JUDGMENT ARE NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE SPIRIT OF THE CONGRES-
SIONAL MANDATE FOR US FOREIGN ASSISTANCE.

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A. "CONTINUED OVEREMPHASIS ON RESEARCH" - RESEARCH, IT IS
ARGUED IS RELIED ON TOO HEAVILY BY THE ILO TO THE DETRIMENT
OF TECHNICAL MEETINGS. THE ISSUE IS NOT AS SUGGESTED A
TRADEOFF BETWEEN RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL MEETINGS. THERE
ARE RATHER TWO ISSUES--THE FIRST IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS
OF COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE; THE SECOND,

WHETHER THE ILO OVEREMPHASIZES RESEARCH.

AS REGARDS THE FIRST ISSUE, THE ASSERTION IS MADE THAT THE WRITTEN WORD IS A LESS EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COLLECTION AND

DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE THAN TECHNICAL MEETINGS BECAUSE "FEW DECISION MAKERS READ ... REPORTS". VERY FEW TECHNICAL MEETINGS, IF ANY, ARE HELD THAT DO NOT HAVE AS A BASIS FOR THE DISCUSSION REPORTS BASED ON RESEARCH--THE PRINTED WORD AND RESEARCH UNDERLYING IT ARE ESSENTIAL PARTS OF TECHNICAL MEETINGS.

A MORE HELPFUL POSITION IN LIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF BOTH WRITTEN PUBLICATIONS AND TECHNICAL MEETINGS IS THAT THE ILO BE HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN THE MEETINGS IT CHOOSES TO HOLD AND MATERIALS IT SELECTS FOR PUBLICATION. THE ORGANIZATION SHOULD ALSO CONTINUALLY ASSESS EFFECTIVENESS OF DIFFERENT MEANS FOR COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE.

ON THE SECOND ISSUE, THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME CONFUSION ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN RESEARCH AND COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE. RESEARCH, TAKEN IN THE FULL CONTEXT OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL'S STATEMENT, IS "INVESTIGATION AIMED AT THE DISCOVERY OR INTERPRETATION OF FACTS, REVISION OF ACCEPTED THEORIES OR LAWS, APPLICATION OF NEW OR REVISED THEORIES". ANALYSIS OF ALL ILO "RESEARCH" WOULD REVEAL WIDELY VARYING USEFULNESS AND QUALITY AND SOME MATERIALS THAT PROBABLY FALL OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE ABOVE DEFINITION OF RESEARCH. A PRIORI AID IS NOT PREPARED TO JUDGE ALL RESEARCH OF THE ILO. HOWEVER, AID DOES TAKE UNCLASSIFIED

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THE POSITION, AS IT HAS EARLIER, THAT TAKEN AS A WHOLE THE EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH PROGRAM IS OF ABOVE AVERAGE QUALITY AND HAS MADE IMPORTANT INTELLECTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS, WHICH HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE FORMULATION OF US POLICY ON DEVELOPMENT AND THE US BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. THE RESEARCH OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY THE USG DELEGATE TO THE GOVERNING BODY.

B. EXCESSIVE SHIFT TOWARD ADVISORY MISSIONS - NO COMMENT AT THIS TIME.

C. "MISDIRECTION OF THE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM" - THE THRUST OF THE TECHNICAL COMMENTS IS THAT THE PROGRAM IS "MISDIRECTED" BECAUSE IT HAS ATTEMPTED TO REACH BEYOND TRADITIONAL "CONSTITUENTS" OF THE ILO TO THOSE CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC PLANNING, EMPLOYMENT, TRADE, FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

THERE SHOULD BE LIMITS TO THE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES TAKEN ON BY THE ILO. IT IS QUESTIONABLE, HOWEVER, WHETHER IT IS IN THE USG INTEREST THAT WORK AND CONTACTS SHOULD BE LIMITED PRIMARILY TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH LABOUR ADMINISTRATION. ACTION BY MINISTRIES OTHER THAN

LABOR MAY HAVE AN IMPORTANT BEARING ON CREATION OF PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND CONDITIONS OF WORK. A MORE FRUITFUL APPROACH WOULD BE TO ATTEMPT TO DEFINE AREAS IN WHICH THE ILO IS FILLING A NEED RELATED TO ITS MANDATE NOT BEING FILLED ELSEWHERE. THE ARBITRARY LIMITATION PROPOSED IN THE TECHNICAL COMMENTS MAY SEVERELY HAMPER ATTAINMENT OF THE HIGH PRIORITY OBJECTIVE OF INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND REDUCING POVERTY. MOREOVER THIS APPROACH IS INCONSISTENT WITH GENERALLY ACCEPTED DEVELOPMENT THINKING WHICH EMPHASIZES THE NEED FOR A CROSS-SECTORAL APPROACH.

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D. "OVERLY AMBITIOUS PROGRAM OF HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS" - ALTHOUGH THE INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR SUCH A PROGRAM MAY BELONG IN A GROUP LIKE UNSO, WE BELIEVE A CAREFUL DISTINCTION OF ILO'S POTENTIAL ROLE AND RELATIVE STRENGTHS MERITS FURTHER DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS. IT WOULD NOT BE WISE AT THIS POINT TO RULE OUT MAJOR ILO PARTICIPATION, AFTER CONSULTATION WITH OTHER DONORS--BILATERAL AS WELL AS MULTILATERAL--ON THEIR PLANS FOR FOLLOWING UP THE U.S.S.C.'S NEW DELHI RESOLUTION WITH RESPECT TO A LARGE MULTI-LDC HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PROGRAM.

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

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Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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